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## MASTER DRAUGHTSMEN.

THE recent exhibition of drawings in Paris at the École des Beaux Arts consisted of nine hundred and fifty works—drawings of all kinds, and even a few aquarelles and pastels—of artists since 1784. The drawings were the drawings of the century, and they brought together on the same walls J. F. Millet and Victor Hugo, Barye and Gérôme, Puvis de Chavannes and Baudry, Henri Regnault and Fragonard, Delaunay and David, Gavarni, Daumier and Charlet, Latour and Meissonier, Corot and Decamps, Millet and Delacroix, Théodore Rousseau and Cabanel, Galland and Prudhon, Ary Scheffer and Gleyre, Ingres and Delaroche, all the great names of the century, all the glories that were and that are. Of course, to speak in detail even of the most remarkable pieces in this exhibition would be impossible. At the utmost one can only aspire to give an idea of the impression of admiration and of astonishment that seized one in presence of this most vivid expression of the individuality of so many great artists. One afternoon I happened to be admiring the perfect drawing of Ingres's lead-pencil portraits of Mlle. Bertin and of Mme. Haudebourg-Lescot in Italian costume, when M. Bonnat came up. "Both are admirable," he said, "marvellous, but Holbein is stronger; Leonardo da Vinci is stronger." "Yes, doubtless," replied his interlocutor, "but it is different." The whole point of the question is there; it is different. To compare the drawings of the various masters here represented is useless; they are different; they are the expressions of different natures; they are representations of nature viewed from different points of view and with different temperaments and different aims. Ingres is not for a moment to be compared with Leonardo; but with Holbein the comparison holds and may be instructive.

The Louvre was within three minutes' walk, and so on leaving the École des Beaux-Arts I went to look at the Holbeins in the Louvre in order to verify M. Bonnat's criticism. Yes; certainly Holbein is stronger than Ingres, and his strength is a consequence of his stronger individuality. Holbein takes a commonplace head, interprets it through the medium of his own great nature, sets it right, reconstructs it, and renders with his pencil the verity of its native harmony; he studies his model sincerely and slowly; he not only has a profound intuition of the character of his model, but he generalizes it a little, exaggerates perhaps some details in order to augment and accentuate the physiognomy and to render the expression clearer. Ingres proceeds in the same way, only his less generous temperament does not serve him so well as the temperament of Holbein served him. Ingres is a dry, narrow-minded, Calvinistic person; he has a profound sentiment of purity of line; he tries to study the character of his model, but his own nature being ungenerous and his sympathies restricted, he is tempted to develop rather the mean qualities than the noble ones, and so, with all the beauty, the perfection and the impeccableness of his drawing, his remarkable pencil portraits always retain something of the dry, unsympathetic character of the draughtsman. The drawing of Ingres is the perfection of naturalist drawing. It is masterly drawing executed perfectly and rapidly. Ingres used to say that an artist ought to be able to sketch a man falling from the top of a house in the time the body took to fall. His drawing is generally very simple and contains few details, few lines, but each line gives some important contour.

Baudelaire used to say that in a certain sense Ingres drew better than Raphael, who is the king of draughtsmen in the popular estimation. Raphael decorated immense spaces; but he would not have drawn so well as Ingres the portrait of your mother or your friend. Ingres hesitated in presence of no ugliness and no oddness; for want of imagination and subservience to document he was a veritable Zola of drawing; and yet his pencil portraits are full of intimacy, of the intimacy of Wordsworth, for instance.

How interesting to compare with the severe drawings of Ingres—portraits in outline modelled with a few lines, and with scarcely a spot of shade to depict

caresses the extremities of a form. For Prudhon the idea of movement, the project of the composition, as well as the line of the drawing, appear, as it were, in a luminous vision.

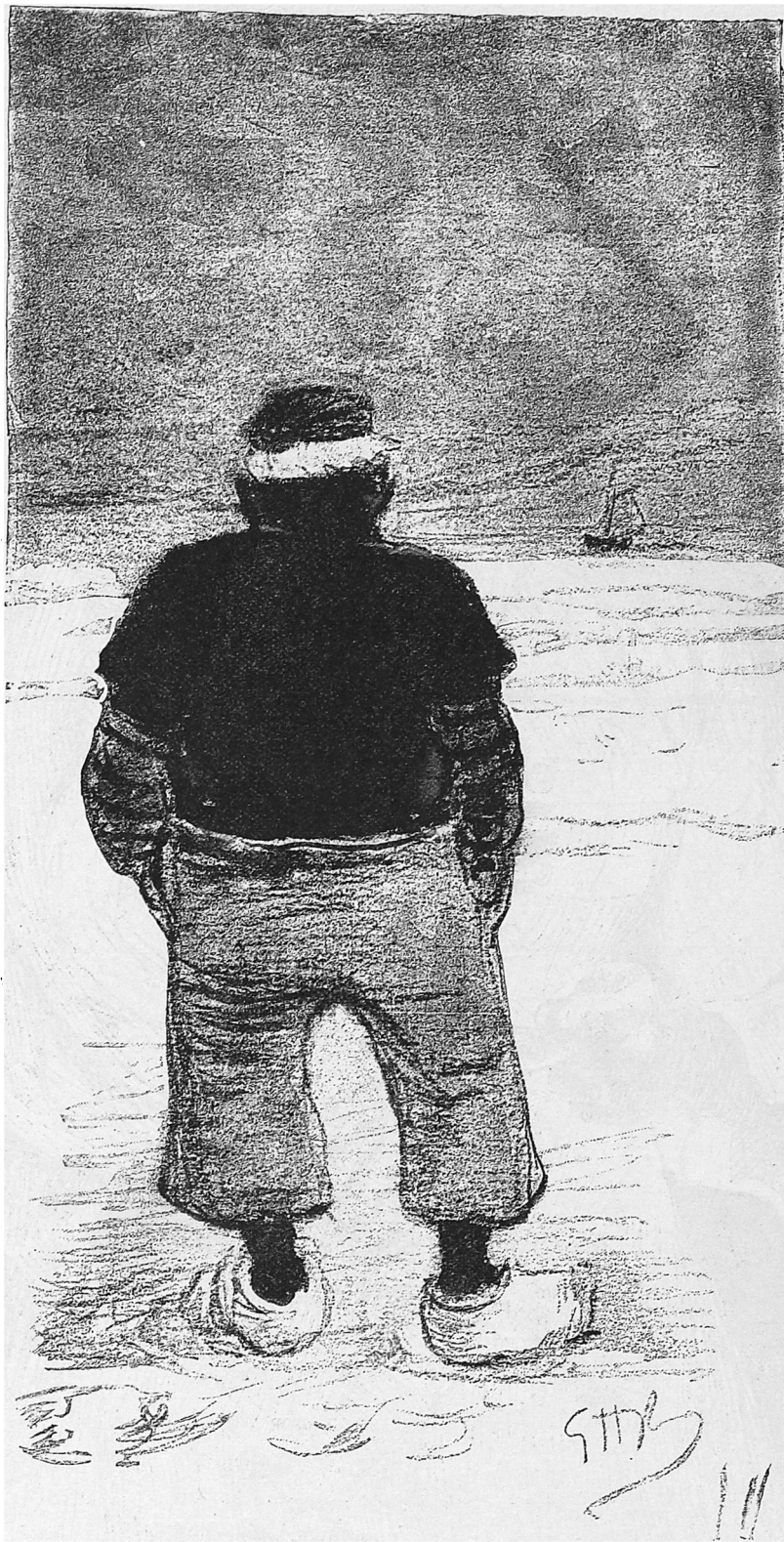
Then we come to Gleyre, who combines the poetic vapory grace of Prudhon with Ingres's perfection and sincerity of faultless line; to Géricault, the mighty composer, enamored of movement and action; to Meissonier, who unites the conscientiousness of the Flemish masters with the verve and elegance of the French; to Henri Regnault, who has something of the grace of Watteau and a force and boldness that reminds one sometimes of Rembrandt. To my mind

these six names stand away above all others in the present exhibition: Ingres, Géricault, Gleyre, Prudhon, Meissonier, Regnault. Next to them and at no great interval come Puvis de Chavannes, Cabanel, Barye, Gérôme, Gavarni, Delacroix—so much abused of old for his ignorance of drawing!—Delaunay, De Neuville, Raffet, Millet and Rousseau, who are all great and interesting. But what is the use of comparisons or classifications? Ah! if these columns were of unlimited length I would ask nothing better than to go on examining with the reader the characteristics of each of the great artists represented, surprising them in the incubation of their masterpieces, peeping over their shoulder while they are at work, discovering their processes, catching glimpses of their temperament, making their acquaintance as only a drawing enables us to do, studying their work intellectually, rationally, analytically, comparing their style as in literature we compare the styles of the great masters, for, as Charles Baudelaire has excellently said, "Drawing is a struggle between nature and the artist, a struggle in which the artist triumphs the more easily the better he comprehends the intentions of nature. What the artist has to do is not to copy, but to interpret in a simpler and more luminous language." THEODORE CHILD.

## LOUIS AUGUSTE LELOIR.

LOUIS LELOIR, the famous French water color painter, who died in Paris at the end of January, after five months' suffering from an incurable ailment, was the son of J. B. Leloir, a well-known French historical painter. His mother, née Héloïse Colin, was also a painter of genre subjects, portraits and miniatures, and a constant and successful exhibitor at the Salon. Maurice Leloir, his brother, is almost as well known as was Louis Leloir. Born March 15th, 1843, the latter was early destined for the career of art. He studied under his father, and his first pictures exhibited at the Salon were Academic subjects, a "Massacre of the Innocents" (1863), "Daniel in the Lions' Den" (1864), and "Jacob Wrestling with the Angel" (1865). Leloir then travelled, and did not reappear at the Salon until 1868, when he

exhibited a "Baptism of Savages in the Canary Islands." Henceforward his manner changed; he yielded to his natural taste for genre subjects, and adopted the brilliant, minute and photographic style of Meissonier, which he applied not only to oil-painting but to water-colors, which he treated with great skill, while introducing all kinds of tricks and processes hitherto employed only by miniature painters, using largely gouache or body color, and stippling to excess, though always retaining, even in his most highly wrought water-colors, a charming finesse and transparency. Louis Leloir obtained three medals, in 1864, 1868 and 1870; the decoration of the Legion of Honor in 1876, and a second-class medal at the Universal



"THERE SHE GOES!" BY GEORGE H. BOUGHTON.

REPRODUCED DIRECTLY FROM A WATER-COLOR SKETCH.

the eyes, no background, the accessories drawn in mere outline, and the whole fixed austere, impeccably, unhesitatingly on the cold white paper—how interesting to compare these drawings with precious studies of Prudhon, those dreams of an Ionian night where the black and white crayons caress the blue paper like a ray of moonlight caressing a marble frieze! Prudhon always proceeds from the interior to the exterior of his figure. He seeks the drawing of the light first of all on the human body rather than the exact delineation of the body; he envelops the contour of his figure with a broad thick line, and leaves the lineaments floating undecided, bathed in that ambient light with which nature brings out and